



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Introduction 3-26-2012

The Student Intern Program provides college students with field experience in courses that they are taking for credit toward a diploma or a degree in social work or in a related field (e.g., psychology, education, sociology) or in a field related to management support services (e.g., information systems, business management, computer technology). It also promotes a positive CP&P image within the community and provides a larger pool of students from which to hire. Student Interns may provide many direct and indirect services in Local and Area Offices, and in the CP&P Central Office.

Student Interns do not carry full responsibility for CP&P cases; that is, the assigned Worker retains overall responsibility for the case and the Student Intern provides assistance. The type of assistance depends on whether the case is considered to be child protective services or child welfare. The assistance may include, but is not limited to:

- assisting field staff with case assessments;
- providing direct client services to an LO client;
- acting as buddies in teamed field responses;
- supervising parent/child visitations;
- providing support to offices which conduct other client-related activities, e.g., Central Office Adoption Registry unit, research;
- providing assistance to offices which provide other support to field offices, e.g., telecommunications, information systems and services.

Student Interns should have minimal or no responsibility for cases which are considered very high risk or high risk.

A Coordinator is designated in each Area Office. It is the responsibility of the Coordinator to oversee the Student Intern Program in his or her Area. All Central Office Student Interns are the responsibility of the Assistant Director (or his or her designee).

Standards for Student Interns 4-1-2013

All Student Interns must be enrolled in accredited schools and require internship experience in order to meet course and/or graduation requirements. In addition, Student Interns are required to meet the following standards in order to be approved to provide services of any kind in a CP&P or DCF office:

- **Ability to provide service:** The student must be physically and emotionally able to provide services and must demonstrate a mature attitude toward both his or her educational goals, the work he or she is expected to do for CP&P, and the purpose of CP&P as a child welfare agency. In addition, the student must have a current reference from his or her Advisor, the college career services office, the professor of the course for which the student is seeking CP&P placement in order to fulfill course requirements, or other college staff responsible for facilitating Student Intern placement. The reference must state that the student is in good academic standing and must include a statement attesting to the Student Intern's character.
- **Criminal history clearance:** The Department of Children and Families requires Student Interns to have criminal history checks which include State and Federal LiveScan fingerprint screening. A State of New Jersey Manual Fingerprint Card, SBI-19, and a Federal Bureau of Investigation Manual Fingerprint Card, [FD-258](#), accompanied by a DCF Form [16-54](#), NJ State Police applicant Identification Verification form, can be used if the student works, lives and goes to school more than 20 miles from the New Jersey border. See [CP&P-IX-C-3-200](#). Students shall not have any record of criminal child abuse/neglect/sexual abuse, or crimes of a violent or sexual nature. In addition, students shall not have any record of misuse or possession of a controlled dangerous substance.
- **Local police check:** A local police check in the municipality in which the student maintains his or her legal residence is required. This is generally the residence of the student's parents where the student resided year-round prior to entering college but now may only reside during summers and semester breaks. For the student living away at college, a check is also conducted in the municipality in which the student resides during the school year, including out-of-state municipalities.
- **CP&P Full Record Review (NJS inquiry), including Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) check:** All Student Interns must be cleared against New Jersey's Child Abuse Registry (see definition at [CP&P-IX-G-1-100.4](#)), including perpetrator listings. A student who has been confirmed as a perpetrator of a Substantiated incident of sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or

neglect shall not be approved for the student intern program, regardless of the type of assignment requested.

- If, upon an NJS review, it is determined that a student is known to CP&P, and was responsible for an Established incident of child abuse or neglect (i.e., is an Established perpetrator of child abuse or neglect), the Student Intern Coordinator in the Area Office, or his or her designee, obtains the CP&P case record, reviews it, and makes the determination whether the applicant is suitable to serve as a student intern to work with DCF children and families, or to perform administrative or other duties.
- Supervision: The student must be willing and able to accept supervision by CP&P staff. He or she must be available during regular working hours/days, unless there is agreement between all parties that it is necessary and appropriate for the student to work after hours. Examples of after-hours work would be assisting supervised visitation of a parent and child, participation in a CP&P-run group activity for clients, or assistance to a Resource Family Support Worker in conducting new resource parent training.
- Training: The student must successfully complete Student Intern orientation and initial training, as well as any other training which the supervising office deems necessary in order for the student to carry out his or her responsibilities or enhance his or her performance as a Student Intern. See [CP&P-IX-C-3-200](#).
- Confidentiality: The student must clearly be informed of and understand CP&P policy and statutory requirements to keep all information regarding CP&P clients and records confidential. He or she must sign the DCF Confidentiality Agreement (For Non-Employees), CP&P Form [8-80](#), acknowledging that he or she will maintain client confidentiality and not release client information as specified by N.J.S.A. 30:4-24.3 and 9:6-8.10a, and Administrative Order 2:01.
- Health: The student must be in good health, free of debilitating disease or illness and, if in treatment for medical problems, be able to perform the work required by the school and assigned to him or her by CP&P. A letter from the college health services office or the student's physician attesting that the student is in good health is required only when there is reason to believe that the student has a medical problem or condition which will interfere with responsibilities or cause a health risk to clients or others with whom the student will have contact.

If the Student Intern will be using his or her own car to conduct CP&P-related business (not including client transportation), the Student Intern must submit proof of personal auto insurance coverage and a valid driver license.

Regional Coordinator's Responsibilities 5-10-94

The Regional Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the Student Intern Program in his or her region, and has primary responsibility for developing and maintaining the program and providing support to field offices to enable them to successfully utilize Student Interns.

The responsibilities of the Regional Coordinator include:

- developing and maintaining contacts with career services and placement programs at area high schools, colleges and universities;
- attending career days at high schools, colleges and universities;
- conducting presentations about the CP&P Student Intern Program as requested and when appropriate opportunities for presentations arise;
- screening requests from schools for placement of Student Interns;
- meeting and discussing with appropriate school representatives their expectations/requirements for individual Student Intern field placements;
- providing support to field offices in order to enable them to maintain the program;
- interviewing potential Student Interns, ensuring that application materials/verifications are completed, reviewed, and approved before placing a Student Intern in a field office;
- assessing and determining the suitability of the Student Intern for placement in a CP&P office/unit;
- providing general orientation to CP&P Student Interns;
- providing information to field offices about Student Interns available for placement;
- providing feedback as required/requested to the Area Director or Assistant Director in regard to the functioning of the program;
- keeping up to date on related policies;
- coordinating timekeeping activities between field offices and schools, if required.

The responsibility for overseeing and carrying out the responsibilities of the Regional Coordinator for the Student Intern Program in Central Office is that of the Assistant Director, or his designee, in whose office/unit the student is expected to be assigned.

The Coordinator is responsible for facilitating the application and approval process for Student Interns. The process includes:

- interviewing potential student interns;
- processing, documenting, and/or completing the following forms and/or documents for each applicant:
 - Authorization for Release of Information, CP&P Form [26-15](#),
 - Police Check, CP&P Form [5-25](#),
 - DCF Confidentiality Agreement (For Non-Employees), CP&P Form [8-80](#),
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation Manual Fingerprint Card, [FD-258](#), only when the student lives, works, and goes to school more than 20 miles from New Jersey's border,
 - State of New Jersey Manual Fingerprint Card, SBI-19, only when the student lives, works, and goes to school more than 20 miles from New Jersey's border,
 - DCF Form [16-54](#), New Jersey State Police Applicant Identification Verification Form Required for Out-of-State Fingerprinting, only when the student is being fingerprinted out-of-state,
 - Copy of valid Driver License to the Office of Facilities and Support Services (if applicable),
 - Copy of Auto Insurance Coverage Identification Card (if applicable),
- ensuring that required forms/verifications are completed and reviewing them to ensure their acceptability,
- completing a review of CP&P records (CARI check/full record review);
- providing orientation to CP&P which includes overview of the agency, discussion of child abuse/neglect and CP&P's mandate to provide child welfare and protective services, discussion of worker safety issues as outlined in [CP&P-IX-A-1-100](#) if intern is being considered for a direct services assignment, discussion of student's field/area of interest for internship and course requirements, discussion of types of possible assignments, evaluation/assessment of student, confidentiality restrictions.

Personal Interview With Student Intern 5-10-94

The Regional Coordinator conducts a personal interview with the Student Intern applicant. The interview includes discussion of the following:

- why the student has chosen to enter the field of social work or a related field and what he hopes to learn from his internship with CP&P;
- course work or other internships/experience relevant to possible internship with CP&P;
- general discussion of student's life experiences including family, school, social.
- These should be explored further if the student or the Regional Coordinator notes any difficulties or circumstances which may impact the student's internship;
- CP&P and State confidentiality restrictions on release of client information;
- requirements for Student Intern orientation and training;
- expected length of time for internship, number of days/hours student may be required to work in order to meet course requirements;
- possible work assignments, including types of work, offices available for placement;
- on-going assessment and final evaluation of student's placement, i.e., who has this responsibility and how it is accomplished.

Approval 5-21-95

The Regional Coordinator approves or disapproves the Student Intern's application based on assessment of the personal interview and review of application materials/forms. Conflicts in information are discussed with the applicant and/or the referring school and resolved.

The Regional Coordinator's decision is sent by letter to the Student Intern applicant advising him or her of the decision. A Student Intern applicant who is not approved does not have a right to appeal this decision.

Student Intern Liaison 4-1-2013

The Student Intern Liaison is the person identified in each office/unit as responsible for coordinating Student Intern activities between the area office and the office/unit. The Student Intern Liaison's responsibilities include:

- forwarding/directing inquiries from schools/students to the Regional Coordinator;
- soliciting/gathering requests for Student Interns from staff and forwarding them to the Regional Coordinator, i.e., conducting office Student Intern needs assessments;
- facilitating the matching of Student Interns with cases/supervisors;
- collecting assessments and time-keeping records, as required, from supervisors and forwarding to the Regional Coordinator;
- keeping up to date on related policies;
- meeting regularly with supervisors having Student Interns assigned to them to discuss the Student Intern's progress, ability to carry out assigned tasks, etc.

It is the decision of the Office Manager/Designee whether it would be in the best interests of the office for the Student Intern Liaison to assume responsibility for direct supervision of all Student Interns or for individual unit supervisors to do so.

Whatever the decision, the following activities must also be conducted:

- conducting "local" orientation for Student Interns;
- choosing appropriate cases for Student Interns and discussing them with the student and current Worker;
- choosing appropriate assignments/projects for Student Interns who are not placed in field offices or who will have no client contact;
- developing and outlining internship requirements/expectations of the student based on college request/course requirements and office needs; include Worker or other appropriate staff, in planning and discussion when appropriate to circumstances;
- monitoring and meeting regularly with the Student Intern, and, as necessary, the Worker or other appropriate staff in meetings;
- completing assessments required by schools and forwarding to schools through the Regional Coordinator;
- scheduling conferences with the Student Intern's college advisor/ professor/counselor as necessary;

- maintaining time-keeping records for Student Intern and forwarding to Regional Coordinator.

Whenever a Student Intern or a member of his or her family is, or has been, known to the Division as either the subject of a child abuse/neglect investigation (whether Substantiated or not), or is named as a Substantiated perpetrator or an Established perpetrator, the Student Intern Liaison takes action to ensure that case records related to the incident(s) are placed in a secure location, e.g., LO Manager's office, locked file drawer. In addition, the Student Intern should not have access to either an NJ SPIRIT terminal or any NJS information. Alternatively, the Student Intern can be stationed in an office other than that which was involved in the investigation.

Developing the Student Intern Assignment Plan 6-21-95

The Student Intern Assignment Plan is developed by the Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison, the Student Intern, and, as appropriate, the Worker or other staff member who is involved in the Student Intern's assignment(s). The Regional Coordinator provides technical assistance as necessary.

The Student Intern Assignment Plan is developed for the individual Student Intern and must relate to school/class requirements as well as case or task-related assignments. Therefore, the Plan will differ for each internship.

The Student Intern Assignment Plan must include:

- time period covered by the Plan;
- duration of internship;
- specific work/tasks the student is expected to perform, e.g., provide transportation, supervise parent-child visitation, supervise a play group at a day care center, assist in data collection for research;
- paperwork/record keeping requirements;
- required contacts, i.e., with whom, where, when, frequency;
- attendance, training requirements;
- prohibitions specific to the internship and/or to the assignment;
- how/by whom student will be supervised;
- process and procedures for assessment of student's work.

The Student Intern Assignment Plan is signed by those who are party to its development, and copies of the Plan are retained by the Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison responsible for supervising the Student Intern and the Student Intern. If a third party participates in plan development, a copy of the plan is given to that person.

The Plan may be revised if there are any significant changes to the requirements or expectations of any of the parties.

Supervision of Student Intern 5-10-94

The Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison is responsible for providing orientation to the CP&P office of supervision. The orientation includes:

- discussion of relevant CP&P mandates, policies, including its statutory authority, services, client population, community resources, specific office units and their functions;
- introductions to office staff (particularly key members of both professional and clerical units, and other student interns) and "tour" of office, including where student's desk is located, state car storage and use protocols, office supplies;
- where to find and how to use CP&P field operations manuals, and others as needed.

The Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison is responsible for supervising the work and activities of the Student Intern. This includes:

- developing the Student Intern Assignment Plan;
- maintaining attendance/time keeping records;
- supervising the Student Intern, conducting regular conferences with him or her, and monitoring his or her compliance with the Student Intern Assignment Plan;
- providing/arranging training and/or orientation for the student;
- evaluating the student's ability to carry out his or her assignment(s) and providing an assessment to the Regional Coordinator or to the student's school, as required/necessary.

Pursuant to Department of Children and Families' policy, it is required "that "eye-contact" supervision of volunteers [student interns] who work directly with clients be maintained until both State and Federal CHRI results are received. Eye-contact supervision will not be necessary after State background check clearance and prior to Federal background check clearance only when the volunteer [student intern] will have no direct client contact."

Student Intern Assessment 6-21-95

The Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison is responsible for assessing the Student Intern Program. The following areas are assessed:

- Student Intern's ability to carry out tasks specified in the Assignment Plan;
- the quality of casework and/or other activities performed by the Student Intern;
- Student Intern's willingness and ability to accept and benefit from supervision;
- Student Intern's strengths, weaknesses, special skills;
- participation and successful completion of training required and provided by CP&P;
- ability to work with other staff, clients, and community agencies;
- reservations or concerns which may impact negatively on the student and/or his/her work.

The Unit Supervisor/Student Intern Liaison discusses the Student Intern's work with the Student Intern, the Worker, or other staff as necessary, in order to complete the evaluation. In addition, paperwork/forms completed by the Student Intern are reviewed for completeness, correctness and timeliness.

The Regional Coordinator may be contacted for assistance with particularly unusual or difficult evaluations

Copies of the evaluation are given to the Student Intern and to his or her school advisor/professor/counselor; copies are retained for the Office Manager's/Assistant Director's file and for the Student Intern file in the Regional Coordinator's office.

Student Interns who are unable or unwilling to comply with CP&P policies and/or the responsibilities outlined in the Student Intern Assignment Plan may be considered for termination if the situation cannot be corrected. Termination should occur only after discussion with the student, the Casework Supervisor or Office Manager, and the Regional Coordinator to ensure that termination is warranted. The reasons are discussed with the student.

The Student Intern has no right to appeal his or her termination.

If the Student Intern's school has requested that their own assessment form be completed, then the form is completed by the Student Intern's evaluator. A copy of the form is maintained in the Student Intern's file.

Administrative Policies Relating to Student Interns

6-21-95

Use of State Cars 3-26-2012

Student Interns are not permitted to operate State owned vehicles.

Legal Representation 5-10-94

Under the New Jersey Tort Claims Act, the Attorney General defends any State volunteer (which includes Student Interns) who is sued on account of an act of omission occurring in the scope of his or her volunteer activity for the State. (See Administrative Order 3:01) If such a suit is filed against a Student Intern, he or she must notify the Student Intern Liaison/Unit Supervisor immediately and cooperate fully in his defense.

The Student Intern Liaison/Unit Supervisor must notify the Attorney General, through the Office of Legal Regulatory Liaison - (OLRL) or the Office of Affirmative Action in a discrimination complaint, within ten days of the Student Intern's receipt of service of Summons and Complaint.

The State may refuse to indemnify a Student Intern (volunteer), i.e., pay the cost of compensatory damage assessed by a court against him or her, when:

- the conduct which is the subject of the Complaint was outside the scope of his or her duties for the State; or
- the Complaint was the result of a commission of a crime by the Student Intern; or
- the Complaint was based on actual malice, actual fraud, or willful misconduct by the Student Intern (volunteer).

Absent facts that would give rise to a good faith refusal to indemnify the volunteer, the State will provide legal representation and pay the cost of any judgment against the Student Intern for compensatory and, depending on the case, punitive damages, along with reasonable settlement costs and court costs. Compensatory damages are those where a loss has been sustained and are awarded to a party as a reimbursement for the actual loss. Punitive damages are awarded in addition to compensatory damages as a penalty and/or punishment to the defendant. Further, the Student Intern may bring suit against the Attorney General to enforce his or her right to recover the cost of his defense, as well as any judgment should the State wrongfully refuse to provide such defense.

As a final note, the Attorney General reserves the right to retain outside counsel to represent the volunteer in the event of a conflict of interest.

The Student Intern must file for legal defense and indemnification per the policy and procedures in the Employee Practices Manual. See [CP&P-IX-L-1-100](#).

Injury to a Student Intern While Performing Internship Service 5-10-94

Under the New Jersey Worker's Compensation Act, a Student Intern is not considered to be an employee and, therefore, is not eligible for benefits under this legislation. The Student Intern may utilize his or her own medical/ health insurance coverage.

However, the Student Intern may submit a claim against the State of New Jersey under the New Jersey Tort Claims Act. Such a claim would be judged on the factors of whether or not there was negligence by the State of New Jersey which caused or contributed to the occurrence of the accident.

In addition, if the Student Intern is injured on the premises of a CP&P provider, e.g., a day care center, he or she may have access to liability/medical coverage from providers who are required to carry liability/health insurance coverage pursuant to Division contract policy.

There is currently no insurance policy maintained by the State of New Jersey which would compensate a volunteer for injuries incurred while in the course of performing service for the State.

Reimbursement for Expenses 5-10-94

Mileage expenses are reimbursable to volunteers who are on official CP&P business, however, this travel must be authorized and monitored by a responsible employee, such as the Office Manager or Designee or Assistant Director. Student Interns are eligible for reimbursement for traveling to and from their homes/schools and their work sites. Mileage reimbursement is via New Jersey Payment Voucher PV6-93. See [CP&P-IX-F-1-700](#).

Occasional meals and snacks purchased for children under CP&P supervision may be reimbursed to a volunteer via a CP&P Form [16-29](#), Petty Cash Voucher. A receipt for the purchase must be attached and the reimbursement cannot exceed limits for occasional meals and snacks as stated in [CP&P-IX-F-1-600](#).